

Today's Soldier

TODAY'S soldiers are arguably the smartest, deadliest and best trained in the history of our nation. In fact, the U.S. Army is commonly accepted as being the best in the world.

Some of the credit for that world-renowned reputation must be given to technological advances over the last 100 years. Soldiers now have individual equipment that provides almost every possible combat advantage.

This representation of the soldier of today includes individual equipment currently being issued to soldiers around the world.

Improved Rainsuit

The IRS parka and trousers are made of a pliable, moisture vapor semipermeable polyurethane backside coated nylon material with a durable water-repellant finish. The parka will accept the standard button-in field jacket liner for additional insulation. The parka also has underarm-ventilation slide fasteners, front insignia tab and adjustable toggle closures at the hood and bottom hem. The trousers have slide-fastener, adjustable-closure, bottom leg hems for easier donning and doffing without removal of boots.

Weight: 2.9 pounds

Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology Ensemble

The JSLIST ensemble is a lightweight, flexible clothing system that provides protection against chemical and biological agents. The JSLIST components include an overgarment worn over the Battle Dress Uniform, and the Multipurpose Rain/Snow/CB Overboot worn over standard combat boots. These items, when combined with standard CB protective butyl gloves and masks for respiratory protection, allow for complete mission-oriented protective posture flexibility.

Weight: 9.6 pounds

Knee and Elbow Pads

Knee and elbow pads provide protection to dismounted soldiers engaged in tasks that subject these areas to possible injury caused by impacts, pressure, protruding objects and debris. The pads come in three sizes and are constructed of a molded, high-density polyethylene shell fastened to a camouflage fabric outer cover that is sewn to a polyester inner lining. Inside the covering is sewn a three-segment impact-cushioning polyethylene foam.

Weight: 1.7 pounds

Interceptor Body Armor

The Interceptor system was designed to provide effective defense against shrapnel from mines, grenades, artillery fire, mortar shells and rifle bullets. The IBA system consists of a Kevlar vest with detachable neck and groin guards, and small-arms protective inserts.

Weight: 16.4 pounds

Protection without inserts: 9mm pistol rounds and shrapnel

Protection with inserts: 7.62mm rifle rounds and shrapnel

Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment System

The MOLLE system consists of a modular rucksack with removable compartments and components, and a fighting load vest that accepts removable pockets for rifle, pistol, squad automatic weapon and grenadier configurations. One waist belt serves both the vest and backpack, and allows quick release of the backpack from the waist belt. The MOLLE also includes an On-the-Move Hydration System.

Weight: 16.8 pounds

Modular Sleeping Bag System

The MSBS is a bag-within-a-bag concept. An intermediate sleeping bag fits into a "patrol" warm-weather bag to form an extreme cold-weather sleeping bag. The bivouac cover can be used in any configuration. The system is augmented by the use of the insulating layers of the Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System. The MSBS consists of a camouflage, water resistant, breathable bivouac cover; a lightweight patrol sleeping bag; an intermediate cold-weather sleeping bag; and a compression stuff sack (to store and carry the system).

Protection:

Patrol Bag: 35 to 50 degrees

Intermediate CW Bag: -5 to 35 degrees.

Patrol, ICW and ECWCS: Down to -50 degrees.

Weight: 10.6 pounds

Meal, Ready-to-Eat, Individual

The standard military ration for the individual soldier is the MRE, which was fielded in the early 1980s. Each MRE contains approximately 1,300 calories. The MRE remains usable for three years at 80 degrees and six months at 100 degrees. Since 1993, 70 new items have been approved for the MRE, 14 of the least popular items were replaced, menus increased from 12 to 24, and four vegetarian meals are now included.

Weight: 1.5 pounds

Personnel Armor System Ground Troops Helmet

The standard PASGT helmet was first fielded in the early 1980s. The helmet, available in five sizes, provides ballistic protection to the head from fragmenting munitions. It is a one-piece structure composed of multiple layers of Kevlar 29 ballistic fabric and phenolic/PVB resin.

Weight: 3.1 pounds (X-Small)

4.2 pounds (X-Large)

Fighting Load Vest

Interceptor Body Armor

Elbow Pads

M-9 Multipurpose Bayonet System

The M-9 multipurpose bayonet system is used as a bayonet on the M-16-series rifle and the M-4-series carbine, as a hand weapon, as a general field and utility knife, as a wirecutter together with its scabbard, and as a saw.

Knee Pads

Night Vision Goggles, AN/PVS7D

This helmet-mounted image-intensification system is used for such night-time operations as driving, walking, map reading and performing maintenance. The system is designed for use in conjunction with rifle-mounted aiming lights.

Weight: 1.5 pounds

Range: 150 meters (man-size target in starlight)
350 meters (quarter moon)

Field of view: 40 degrees

Magnification: 1x

Power: Two AA batteries or one lithium battery.

Soldier Intercom

The Soldier Intercom allows soldiers to talk to each other from up to 700 meters without giving away their positions. Squad leaders can talk to the entire squad simultaneously on a discreet channel heard only by them. Each SI unit includes a receiver/transmitter, rechargeable battery pack and headset with boom microphone.

Weight: 1.4 pounds

MOLLE System

On-the-Move Hydration System

M-4 Carbine

The M-4 is a more compact, four-position buttstock version of the M-16A2 rifle.

Caliber: 5.56mm

Magazine capacity: 30 rounds

Overall length (compact): 29.8 inches

M-40 Protective Mask

The M-40 mask protects soldiers against nuclear, biological and chemical threats by filtering air through an externally mounted filter canister. The canister is easy to replace and can be mounted on the left or right side of the mask. The M-40 is used in conjunction with the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology ensemble to allow for complete mission-oriented protective posture.

Weight: 4.5 pounds

Battle Dress Uniform, Temperate Zone

This four-color, woodland-camouflage pattern uniform is intended for use in temperate-zone combat, field and garrison environments. The coat is a "bush"-type design with breast and lower pockets with flaps. The trousers have four standard pockets, two with flaps, and two leg-cargo pockets with flaps. The cloth is 50 percent cotton, 49 percent nylon and one percent static dissipative fiber.

Weight: 3.1 pounds

Combat Boot, Mildew- and Water-Resistant

Combat boots are worn in combat, field and garrison environments that don't require specialized footwear. The upper boot is made of cattlehide leather treated for mildew and water resistance. The boot has a lace-and-closed-loop closure system, padded collar and direct-molded sole with deep-lug tread design and a replaceable heel.

Weight: 4.1 pounds per pair (Size 9)